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Macroeconomic policy questions

Sustainable development

Globalization and interdependence

Operational activities for development

Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

General and complete disarmament

Note verbale dated 7 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Cuba has the honour to enclose herewith the following documents adopted at the Seventh Summit of the Association of Caribbean States, which took place in Havana on 4 June 2016: Havana Declaration (see annex I); Plan of Action for 2016-2018 (see annex II); and Special Declaration (see annex III).

The Permanent Mission of Cuba kindly requests the Secretary-General to circulate the Havana Declaration, Plan of Action and Special Declaration as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 18, 20, 22, 25, 42, 70 and 97.

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Annex I to the note verbale dated 7 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

SEVENTH SUMMIT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)

Havana, Cuba, June 4th, 2016

HAVANA DECLARATION

"United for a Sustainable Caribbean"

1. The Seventh Summit of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), meeting in Havana, Cuba, on 4 June, 2016;

2. *Reaffirms* the validity of the principles and objectives set out in the Convention Establishing the Association of Caribbean States, and its importance as an organization for consultation, coordination and cooperation so as to advance Latin American and Caribbean integration, which will result in benefits for all our peoples;

3. *Recognizes* the threats and challenges facing the Greater Caribbean and in particular, Small Island Developing States, for the achievement of sustainable development, and of the need to strengthen the coordination and cooperation capacities within the ACS to better face the challenges of the present world context, aggravated by economic and financial crises and the adverse impact of climate change;

4. *Reiterates* the responsibility of our States in building fair, equitable, people centered and inclusive societies, as well as the commitment with the promotion and protection of all human rights for all and with the aim of eradicating hunger and poverty it all its forms and dimensions, ensure food and nutritional security and universal access to quality education, among others, and meet the Goals and Targets included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

5. *Reiterates, in addition*, our unrestricted respect for the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter and for the principles of International Law, which are essential for ensuring an environment of peace and cooperation, including the inalienable right of every State to determine its own political, economic, social, and cultural system;

6. *Reaffirms* our deep aversion to racism and all forms of discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance of any other guise, in our Caribbean and globally.

7. *Recognizes* that slavery and the slave trade were atrocious crimes against humanity, *reaffirms* the Durban Declaration, in particular, the importance of establishing compensatory and reparatory effective resources and measures, among others, at the national, regional and international levels in order to cope with the persistent effects of the slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, and *welcomes* CARICOM's initiative for the creation of the Reparations Commission of the

Caribbean Community, and praises the efforts of said commission to correct such injustices;

8. *Reiterates* our profound commitment to the upholding of the human rights of migrants, irrespective of their migration status. *Reiterates, furthermore*, the need for regular, orderly and safe migration and to ensure an effective struggle against the illegal traffic of migrants and trafficking in persons, as well as all discrimination against them, independently of their national or ethnic origin. *Highlights also* the social, cultural and economic contributions of migrants, irrespective of their migration status.

9. *Ratifies* the validity of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, signed by the Heads of State and Government of the region at the Second Summit of the Community of Latin American and the Caribbean States (CELAC), held in Havana in January 2014;

10. While agreeing to work for the consolidation of CELAC, *underscores* the importance of strengthening relations between the Community and the ACS as a contribution to jointly promoting dialogue, coordination and integration in the Region, without prejudice to existing coordination groups on issues of interest and relevance of the Community of Member States. *Underlines, likewise* the importance of also fostering coordination and articulation with other regional and subregional mechanisms and organizations, in particular CARICOM, OECS and SICA, aimed at achieving a more efficient use of resources and strengthening cooperation, complementarities and solidarity;

11. *Reiterates* our strong rejection of all unilateral lists and certifications that affect countries of our Association. *Expresses* our deep concern over the inclusion of ACS Member States on the list of non-cooperative jurisdictions of the European Union and call for a constructive dialogue between the affected countries and the European Union with the aim of re-examining the list based on objective criteria and on the commitments of countries in conformity with the standards adopted by the Transparency Global Forum and the exchange of information with taxing purposes (Global Fund);

12. *Expresses*, our deep concern and rejection to the progressive decline in correspondent banking relationships with developing countries, particularly Member States of the ACS, in light of recent de-risking actions by some of the major international banking partners, which poses a threat to the financial stability of the affected countries and limits their efforts towards sustained socio-economic growth and development;

13. *Fully supports* the consideration of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Debt Initiative, which takes into consideration the highly indebted nature of many Caribbean nations and recommends an approach that recognizes the principles of the Financing for Development, the Sustainable Development Goals and proposes, among other initiatives to be considered, a Caribbean Resilience Fund for the countries benefitted by debt relief;

14. *Reaffirms* its commitment to a rule-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, just, equitable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, in the context of the World Trade Organization, as well as to a trade liberalization, which allows reducing existing asymmetries and promoting the sustainable development of

our countries, in particular of small economies. *Rejects* all actions which may undermine its integrity, and *calls for* the search of a prompt solution to the existing disputes on the basis of International Law;

15. *Recognizes* the importance of preserving Official Development Assistance and other types of concessional funding for sustainable development, in accordance with the national objectives and strategies Middle Income Countries in particular those highly-indebted. The present methodology of measuring development levels, solely based on per capita income, reduces access to concessional financing and does not consider the structural gaps of that group of countries. *Urges* donor countries and international financial institutions to introduce exceptions in policies of differentiation and graduation aimed at ensuring access to loans at concessionary rates by Middle Income Countries, specially highly indebted island developing countries and those vulnerable to external impacts;

16. *Recognizes* the importance of the mobilization of financial resources and other means of implementation to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in this regard, *welcomes* the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development;

17. *Conscious* of the vulnerability of the Greater Caribbean, particularly the Small Island Developing States and the Central American Isthmus, and of the negative impact of climate change on their economies, *welcomes* the adoption in March 2015, of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030; and *reaffirms* its guiding principles, in particular the fundamental role of the State in prevention and disaster risk reduction. It also *commits* to the success of the Fifth Session of Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2017 to be held in Cancun, Mexico in May 2017;

18. *Ratifies* the need to strengthen cooperation within the framework of the ACS, giving priority to a comprehensive disaster risk management approach and reducing the vulnerability of our countries to the risks of natural, biological, technological and man-made hazards, in order to decrease human and material losses. In this context it *confirms* the importance of creating synergies aimed at avoiding duplications and multiplying the impact of those measures taken;

19. *Recognizes* the initiative of the Humanitarian Assistance Logistical Center presented by the government of Panama, whose objective is to incorporate the emergency operations of various actors that would provide coordinated, rapid and efficient answers to the requests received from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular to the ACS members, constantly imperilled by disasters associated with the multiple threats prevalent in the region.

20. *Recognizes* the importance of the Caribbean Sea as a common asset of our peoples, according to the framework of what is set by the Convention Establishing the ACS, and the role it has played in the history and identity of the region and its potential as a unifying element in their development, and *ratifies* our shared responsibility in preserving its ecological integrity. *Reiterates* our firm and forceful rejection of the continued use of the Caribbean Sea for transit and transhipment of nuclear material and toxic waste and *urges* the countries that produce and transport them, to implement urgently relevant measures and establish reprocessing plants to end the need to transport such waste;

21. *Ratifies* its commitment to the protection of the Caribbean Sea and *underscores* the importance of the mandate of the Caribbean Sea Commission, recognized by Latin America and the Caribbean Heads of States and Governments in the IV CELAC Summit held January 27th 2016, to promote its preservation and sustainable use. *Urges* the Commission to finalize a work programme containing specific goals and objectives, for the development of the Caribbean Sea as a "Special Area in the Context of Sustainable Development", as adopted in resolution A/RES/69/216 of the United Nations General Assembly. *Requests* the General Secretariat of the ACS to provide the necessary support for their achievement and to report regularly to the Ministerial Council of its progress and difficulties;

22. *Recognizes* the high vulnerability of our region to the serious effects of climate change and its negative consequences on our economies, societies, biodiversity, endemic and highly vulnerable species and fragile ecosystems, particularly coral reefs, especially in Small Island Developing States, mountain ranges, countries with low-lying coastal areas, and the Central America isthmus, well as for the entire planet. *Commits* itself to increase efforts to strengthen cooperation in the framework of ACS, and with other international bodies and agencies, especially with the Observer countries, through, among others, of the Programme of ACS to Counter Climate Change in the Greater Caribbean 2016-2018, implement actions to reduce present and future vulnerability to climate change of populations, human losses and damage to ecosystems and economic sectors, so as to advance in the adaptation process, including the implementation of comprehensive programmes and projects to strengthen our resilience, reduce our vulnerability and foster greater adaptation and mitigation;

23. *Highlights* the importance of the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that adopted the Paris Agreement and its accompanying decision, signed by 175 countries. This result, guided by the principles of the Convention and pursuant to Article 17 of the accompanying decision, strengthens the international framework in the struggle against climate change, and guides finance flows to low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. Likewise, *urges* to strengthen the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in light of diverse national circumstances in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty. *Further urges* developed countries to continue taking the leadership pursuant to the Convention and the Agreement, including the fulfilment of their commitments on new and additional financial resources as ODA, technology transfer, and capacity building in developing countries. Specially *calls upon* for international cooperation, particularly of Observer countries and other stakeholders committed to the Caribbean region. *Also calls upon* to strengthen the articulation between climate and environmental issues with the fight against poverty within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

24. *Welcomes* with satisfaction the restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America and the reopening of their respective embassies. *Reiterates* its deepest rejection to the application of unilateral coercive measures and *reaffirms* its call to the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on that sister nation, repeal the Helms-Burton Law and cease its extraterritorial application. *Urges* the President of the United States to use his broad executive powers to substantially modify the blockade;

25. *Considers* that the return to the Republic of Cuba of the territory occupied by the US Naval Base in Guantanamo should be a relevant element in the process of normalization of relations between the two countries, through a bilateral dialogue in conformity with International Law;

26. *Firmly supports* the completion of the dialogue process taking place between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army (FARC-EP) and *welcomes* the progress achieved towards ending a conflict that has affected the social economic and political development of that sister nation for more than 50 years, and *expresses* its support to the success of this process, as well as the one will begin with the National Liberation Army, so both could lead to a stable and lasting agreement in the best interests of the Colombian people;

27. *Acknowledges* current efforts to overcome the electoral crisis in Haiti, *encourages* and *urges* all actors to find, through dialogue, the commitment to free, fair, honest, transparent and inclusive elections as early as feasible. These would contribute both to the strengthening of democracy and creating a suitable environment for the country's development.

28. Strongly *condemns* terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whosoever it is committed. *Pledges* to actively and effectively cooperate to prevent, investigate, punish and combat all manifestations of this scourge;

29. *Reiterates* its commitment to general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament and, in this context, *underlines* its commitment to the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). *Urges* those nuclear powers that have made reservations and interpretative declarations to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to review and remove them;

30. *Takes note* of the debate carried out in the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May and *urges* the international community to continue its efforts to strengthen the international humanitarian assistances system on the bases of Resolution 46/182 of the U.N. General Assembly and with full respect for the principles of International Law;

31. *Reaffirms* its will to unite our territories by sea and air routes to facilitate the exchange of goods and services that contribute to the development of trade and investment in the Caribbean. *Invites* all Member States and associate members to continue working on the development of multi-destination tourism projects and the creation of maritime and air lines;

32. *Expresses* its satisfaction over the upcoming inauguration of the Panama Canal expansion. This masterpiece of the twenty-first century will go on exerting a positive impact on the development of the maritime sector and the region's economic circumstances, therefore, *recognizes* the efforts of the Panamanian people and government who, through this important platform of services, will continue contributing to the development of navigation, commerce and international maritime industry.

33. *Ratifies* its commitment to the promotion of sustainable tourism, as a central pillar for the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals. In that sense, *urges* Member States and Associate Members to implement the Convention Establishing

the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Caribbean, which will result in the sustainability of our Caribbean Sea;

34. *Welcomes* the implementation of the Plan of Action of Pétionville and the commitments of Merida Declaration, with successful actions in priority and strategic areas; such as: the First Symposium on the Caribbean Sea "Challenges, Dialogue and Cooperation Towards Sustainability of the Caribbean Sea"; projects to strengthen our capacity for Disaster Risk Reduction, such as SHOCS project, the Project for Strengthening Spatial Data Infrastructures in Member States and Territories of ACS, the Caribbean Platform of Territorial Information for Disaster Prevention; proposals to improve connectivity and facilitate trade as Map of Maritime Routes, International Transit of Goods and Short Distance Maritime Transport; the establishment of the new Barbados-Bogota-Barbados route, thanks to the initiative of the Government of Colombia; the beginning of the first phase of the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Caribbean with the support of Interreg program; Creation of the Carnival Network in Santiago de Cuba, and the beginning of Language Training program CIGAREL/INTERREG supported by the Government of Guadalupe;

35. *Agrees* to the approval of the Action Plans, which guide Committee work, every three years, and establish the required budget for its implementation at the Summits of Heads of State and/or Government, within the framework of the strategic pillars of the Association, on the basis of projects with a gender approach that contribute to the development of Member State countries, with concrete and measurable impacts;

36. *Congratulates* the Council of National Representatives of the Special Fund for organizing, together with the General Secretariat, the "Forum of National Cooperation Agencies" in December 2015, that developed recommendations to strengthen international cooperation in the field of ACS and *urges* to continue to improve management mechanisms for financing projects approved by the Ministerial Council in the priority areas identified by the Heads of State and Government;

37. *Agrees*, as a following stage in the successful process of revitalization, fulfilled in the last four years, to initiate a reflection process on the working mechanisms of the ACS, to continue deepening the effectiveness of its management, in accordance with the priorities set by Heads of State and/or Government of the Association. To that end, *requests* the Executive Board of the Ministerial Council to create a working group with the General Secretariat to present the appropriate proposals to the next Ministerial Council;

38. *Welcomes* the accession of the Community of San Martin, as an Associate Member of the ACS in its own name. In that sense, the ACS and the Government of the French Republic will sign an agreement to define the modalities of participation of San Martin as an Associate Member and an amending Protocol to the Agreement which defines the modalities of participation of the government of France as an Associate Member representing Guadeloupe, French Guiana and Martinique, signed in Mexico on May 24, 1996;

39. *Recognizes* that the majority of Member States and Associate Members have fulfilled their financial duties, which has allowed to increase the Regular Budget and thus to strengthen the organization, capacity and scope of their activities. *Urges*

those who have not yet done so to fulfil their financial duties for the well-being of the Association;

40. *Requests* the General Secretariat to formalize the Special Fund Management Unit as a permanent office, in order to consolidate the managing of resources and international financing in priority areas of ACS. Likewise, *urges* Observer States and other stakeholders to also cooperate with the Special Fund;

41. *Requests* the Secretariat to work for the greater possible promotion of cooperation and development in the fields of culture and education in order to contribute to reinforcing unity in the Greater Caribbean and its overall and sustainable development.

42. *Thanks* and *congratulates* the Secretary General, His Excellency Ambassador Alfonso Munera Cavadía, for having successfully fulfilled his mandate at the head of the Association, in accordance with our goals and objectives; at the same time *welcomes* the election of Her Excellency, Ambassador June Soomer, as new Secretary General, whose qualities and commitment will boost the revitalization of the ACS, to which we *reaffirm* our strong support;

43. *Adopts* the Plan of Action 2016-2018 and instruct the Ministerial Council, pursuant to Article VIII of the Convention Establishing the ACS, to monitor and evaluate it at its next Ordinary Meeting, in order to ensure its effective implementation; and

44. *Expresses* our deep gratitude to the President of the Councils of State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, His Excellency Raul Castro Ruz, to the Cuban government and people for their hospitality and for the excellent manner in the organization of the VII Summit of ACS in Havana.

Havana, 4 June 2016

Annex II to the note verbale dated 7 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

7TH ACS MEETING OF HEADS OF STATE AND/OR GOVERNMENT HAVANA, CUBA: JUNE 4, 2016

PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2016-2018

The tasks outlined in this Plan of Action of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) will be completed within a three-year period: 2016 to 2018. The Secretariat will present periodic reports and recommendations on their execution to the Ministerial Council and its subsidiary bodies which must decide on the actions to be taken and possible amendments to be made, taking into account the changes and different circumstances that may arise.

The ACS thanks the Member States and Associate Members for their ongoing and valuable support for the projects and activities identified in this document.

1. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1.1 Establishment and Consolidation of the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean (STZC)

This area of work includes the establishment and recognition of the Greater Caribbean as a region that fosters sustainable tourism development. It defines the normative and regulatory framework of the STZC and coordinates regional efforts supporting the establishment of the Region as a Sustainable Tourism Zone.

The five main actions to be undertaken in this area are:

1.1.1 Continuing the process of ratifying the STZC Convention and Protocol by all Member States and Associate Members of the ACS who have not yet done so;

1.1.2 Continuing the dissemination of information about the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean (STZC) among the Member States and Associate Members of the ACS.

1.1.3 Following-up with the Regional Cooperation Mechanism (RCM) that allows the application of Sustainable Tourism Indicators at destinations selected by ACS Member States and Associate Members.

1.1.4 Considering existing processes in the region, validation of the sustainability level of destinations in the STZC will be developed, with a view to the establishment of a certification system.

1.1.5 Once the application of Sustainable Tourism Indicators has been accomplished, the development of the multi-destination tourism in the STZC will be stimulated at destinations proposed by the Member States and Associate Members.

1.2 Capacity Building in the Tourism Sector:

To promote education in sustainable tourism addressing the human resources in the different areas of the sector in order to increase the competitiveness of destinations in the region.

The four main actions to be undertaken in this area are:

1.2.1 Promoting the implementation of a Regional Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Region.

1.2.2 Continuing with the Programme for the Promotion of Languages and Cultures of the Greater Caribbean in coordination with the International

Centre of Guadeloupe for Regional Language Strategy Project (CIGAREL, in its French-language acronym) of INTERREG — Guadeloupe.

1.2.3 Drawing up the Regional Tourist Safety Strategy in conjunction with the work group to deal with potential security threats at tourist destinations.

1.2.4 Developing capacity building in matters of tourism safety, continuing with the exchange of experiences and best practices.

1.3 **Community Tourism:** Supporting community tourism initiatives to promote social inclusion and sustainable development, and supporting the development of tourism-related micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through regional partnerships and collaboration to contribute to their sustainability and growth, maintaining cultural heritage and the environmental integrity of ecological areas.

The two main actions to be undertaken in this area are:

1.3.1 Creating a database of Community Tourism Projects which exist in the region, sharing best practices as well as lessons learned.

1.3.2 With the support of the Regional Network of Artisans in Tourism in the Greater Caribbean, creating a database for the handicraft sector in the Region and supporting coordination of activities to achieve the consolidation of the network.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE AND EXTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

2.1. **Gradual Reduction and Elimination of Trade and Investment Barriers in the Greater Caribbean:** This area will focus on holding technical meetings of the Working Groups on Customs and Port Facilitation, including those relating to the hydrographic capacities of member countries.

International Transit of Goods (TIM) and the Short-Distance Maritime Transport (SDMT) Project will be continued, and the hydrographical capacities of the relevant ACS membership agencies (FOCAHIMECA) will be strengthened, financed by the Mexican Government with funds from the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID).

2.1.1 **International Transit of Goods (TIM) Project**

The objective is to reduce the shipping time of goods in transit by means of a standardized process which allows the information required by customs, immigration and phyto and zoo-sanitary officials to be consolidated into a single document (Single Transit Document — DUT) which would include the electronic dispatching of export declarations in advance, thereby assisting in commercial operations.

2.1.2 **Short-Distance Maritime Transport Project (SDMT)**

The goal of the SDMT project is to analyse operations obstacles in the region's ports and to identify concrete actions to improve the operational efficiency of their ports while seeking to promote intra-regional trade by short-distance maritime transport, emphasizing support for small ports. It also includes the

creation of a database of importing needs and/or requirements and export offers designed to encourage and facilitate the growth of intraregional trade.

2.1.2.1 **Strengthening Hydrographical Capacities in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean Project (FOCAHIMECA)**

The FOCAHIMECA Project aims to create or boost the hydrographical capacities of the states and territories of Mesoamerica and the Caribbean by:

(a) increased bathymetric databases on maritime areas;

(b) safety guarantees for the navigation of merchant and tourist ships;

(c) the creation and/or increase in the efficiency of shipping routes and port infrastructures to boost maritime and economic development based on the information collected, and

(d) training specialists to use current technologies to conduct bathymetric surveys and produce electronic nautical charts that would help ensure the safety of maritime navigation and increase the efficiency of hydrographical services.

2.1.3 **Establishing a working group to study tariff preferences in the Caribbean:**

To put together a working group to analyse and discuss the possibility of having tariff preferences in the Greater Caribbean that would permit the promotion of intraregional trade.

2.2 **Joint Program for the Promotion of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the Greater Caribbean**

As part of this project, activities promoting MSMEs will be carried out with financial and technical support of the Government of Colombia, through its Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism, the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (APC-Colombia), and other institutions with expertise in the field.

2.3 **Promoting the convergence and intensification of trade within the ACS through New Schemes. Strengthening trade capacities**

Foreseeing the production of financial bulletins that would identify possible trade and investment flow channels.

Similarly, the implementation of courses, seminars and training workshops that would broaden and strengthen knowledge of trade-related issues in the Greater Caribbean Region with the technical assistance of specialized international and regional organizations and institutions, transmitting implemented best practices.

2.4 **The Greater Caribbean Business Forum**

This forum seeks to promote trade, investment and knowledge-sharing among business community of the Greater Caribbean. Cuba is offering to host this event in Santiago de Cuba in 2017.

3. TRANSPORT

The **Uniting the Caribbean by Air and Sea program** will be implemented by air and maritime transportation actions for the purpose of effectively contributing to the expansion of intra-Caribbean trade and investment, multi-destination tourism, as well as functional cooperation in general among the Member States and Associate Members of the ACS.

Along with the Pétion-Ville Plan of Action and observing the conclusions of the recently-concluded Port and Maritime Strategy, the Directorship will focus its attention during this period on improving the capacity of the region's ports thereby contributing to risk reduction. To this end, the following actions will be undertaken:

3.1 Maps of Greater Caribbean Maritime Routes

Implementing Phases IV and V of Maps of Greater Caribbean Maritime Routes to show the existing regular container line maritime transport services, their frequency and the locations of different shipping line agents by ports-of-call found on the interactive map posted on the ACS, COCATRAM and Maritime Authority of Panama (AMP) regularly updated webpages.

3.2 The Greater Caribbean Port and Maritime Strategy

Putting into practice the recommendations of the strategic plan for the development of maritime ports in the Greater Caribbean, in particular actions designed to benefit the development of small maritime ports in order to have a competitive sector that is capable of meeting the region's foreign trade needs, which could efficiently sustain the increased traffic expected to result from, among other things, the expansion of the Panama Canal in 2016.

3.2.1 The Senior Port Management Course

In keeping with the findings of the Port and Maritime Strategy Study which established capacity-building at the senior level especially in Tier III ports, the project will include running training activities in key identified areas following consultation with regional port authorities.

3.3 Continuing efforts for Connectivity

Working towards establishing a framework of activities with international partners to address issues concerning air and maritime connectivity within the Greater Caribbean region.

3.3.1 Air Transport Agreement among Member States and Associate Members of the Association of Caribbean States

Continuing to promote the implementation and updating of the Agreement in order to meet the need of a general aviation policy for the Greater Caribbean, establishing a legal and co-operation framework that would offer more air service options with reduced costs and prices, more routes, more carriers and improved services, as well as attaining the highest levels of operational safety and protection for international civil aviation.

3.3.2 ***Defining cooperative actions*** with international agencies within the aviation sphere to improve and facilitate connectivity within the region.

3.3.3 **Convening Meetings of Experts under the theme of connectivity**

This meeting should propose ideas and activities that would improve connectivity in the region of the Caribbean.

4. DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Considering the high exposure and vulnerability of our countries and territories to disasters associated with natural phenomena, ACS aims to foster international co-operation and capacity-building in the area of disaster risk reduction. After careful examination of the international agreements, such as the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the drive to incorporate geospatial data in planning to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the Directorship will be focusing on assessing and identifying risks with geospatial systems, implementing spatial data infrastructures and modelling tools during the period. To this end, the following actions will be undertaken:

4.1 **SHOCS II Follow-Up Project**

SHOCS II Follow-Up Project Phase: Strengthening Hydrometereological Operations and Services in Caribbean Small Island Developing States and the Early Warning System using World Meteorological Organization (OMM) Trust Funds provided by the Government of Finland. This phase is designed to enhance the performance and strengthen the capacity of National Meteorological and Hydrological Institutions and Disaster Management Agencies in ACS Member States through the consolidation of their early warning systems and greater preparedness to mitigate the effects of natural hazards.

4.2 **UNGGIM: United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Caribbean Project:** strengthening the infrastructure of geospatial data of Caribbean States — **Caribbean Project**

This project, developed by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico, will introduce the Caribbean States to the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information management and will provide a link for countries to be a part of the world geodesic framework while improving the capacity for GIS, Spatial Data Infrastructure and its use in planning in the region.

4.3 ***Caribbean Territorial Information Platform for Disaster Prevention (PITCA)***

This project, headed by the National Disaster Prevention Centre of Mexico, will use the UNGGIM project as its information and systems base and will develop, with the aid of regional partners, the online GIS-based multi-risk analysis for sharing and managing risk information across the Caribbean.

4.4 **"Local Risk Management" Onsite Course for ACS Member States**

This Course will be developed in 2017 for countries of the Greater Caribbean at the Centre for Capacity Building for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation organised by the Environmental Agency of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment of the Republic of Cuba.

4.5 **Reduction of regional vulnerabilities**

Cooperative activities will be undertaken with other regional agencies to contribute to DRR processes in the Greater Caribbean Region, using the provisions of the 2030

Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as other instruments related to this subject that are recognized and implemented by ACS Member States.

4.5.1. **Convening a Meeting of Experts on Vulnerability** to propose regional policies for disaster risk reduction based on the identification of key activities, to be carried out by the government agencies involved in disaster management in member countries. This will be compatible with international standards that use geographic information systems such as the UNGGIM: Caribbean Project, the Caribbean Territorial Information Platform for Disaster Prevention (PITCA) and the Strengthening Hydrometeorological Operations and Services in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SHOCS) project as their reference framework.

5. CARIBBEAN SEA COMMISSION

The Caribbean Sea Commission is cognisant of its commitment to the preservation of the Caribbean Sea and of the necessity to continue its efforts towards it being recognised as a Special Area in the context of sustainable development.

5.1 Definition of Special Area in the context of sustainable development

Based on the results of the Consultation and with support from the Legal and Scientific and Technical Sub-Commissions, the Commission intends to proceed with dialogue among Member countries in order to define the steps needed for recognizing the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area in the context of sustainable development.

5.2 Follow up of the I Symposium of the Caribbean Sea Commission

Continuing implementation of the key recommendations made at the First Symposium of the Caribbean Sea Commission and discussed at the XXI Meeting of the Ministerial Council, primarily;

5.2.1 Through implementation of the ACS Program for the struggle against climate change in the Caribbean, with a view to place this region in more favourable conditions to deal with the entry into force of the Paris Agreement.

5.2.2 Using knowledge accumulated by the ACS States and with the assistance of international cooperation in projects regarding the main problems debated in the Symposium, and in particular the emerging threat of Sargassum seaweed, the invasion of lion fish, the peril for coral reefs and coastal erosion. Materializing international cooperation in these fields.

5.3 Annual Meeting of Experts to improve the dialogue between scientists and policy makers

Organize annual symposiums and/or workshops with the participation of experts and government officials responsible for the study and management of critical issues related to the sustainability of the Caribbean Sea within the context of climate change.

5.4 **The Caribbean Sea Commission Databank**

Establishing a data bank to centralize and disseminate relevant information on major threats to the sustainability of the Caribbean Sea.

6. CULTURE AND EDUCATION

6.1 PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITY CENTRES AND OTHER HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

We seek to undertake the following actions:

6.1.1 Facilitating joint research among university research groups and those at other higher education institutions, affecting the socioeconomic and cultural development of the Greater Caribbean;

6.1.2 Establishing contacts with the focal points of academic mobility in each country with a view to creating future synergies contributing to intensifying academic relations in the Greater Caribbean.

6.1.3 Encouraging Greater Caribbean Studies in each Member Country in order to promote research and joint publications among Member States on issues pertaining to the development of the Greater Caribbean.

6.2 COOPERATION IN CULTURE

Facilitating the development of concrete and tangible cultural cooperation programs to strengthen recognised spaces for cultural exchange in the Greater Caribbean such as book fairs, art festivals, art markets and other cultural expressions; among these sport is highlighted, given its capacity to promote friendship among the peoples of the Caribbean and to build collective identities. In particular, we propose:

6.2.1 Consolidating the Greater Caribbean Carnival Network in light of its successful establishment in Santiago de Cuba in July of 2015. Caribbean carnivals constitute one of the richest cultural expressions of our peoples; it is valuable heritage and one of the main instruments we possess for the process of forging a common identity. As a specific task for the 2016-18 period, we propose collaboration with the Network in order to:

6.2.1.1 Organise seminars, conferences, book fairs and exchanges within the framework of the carnivals for the purpose of promoting cooperation and friendship among the peoples.

6.2.1.2 Promote the next Encounter of Greater Caribbean Carnivals to be held in February of 2017 in Colombia, within the framework of Barranquilla Carnival.

7. SPECIAL FUND

7.1 **To increase activities and meetings with potential donors** in order to finance the projects outlined in the Plan of Action of Havana for the 2016-2018 period. Present the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) to international donors as

a partner for implementing and managing projects through the Special Fund. The actions include:

7.1.1 Participating in meetings and events that would contribute to the objectives of the Special Fund to procure funds and greater visibility for the ACS.

7.1.2 Building strategic alliances and joint work with regional partners;

7.1.3 Promoting the exchange of information among donors;

7.1.4 Participating in convocations for project proposals to be presented to potential donors.

7.2 **Promoting technical cooperation and/or financing** by Member countries, for projects and/or initiatives that may arise in the 2016-2018 work program.

7.3 **Drawing up the institutional strengthening project** for the Projects Unit and seeking financing.

Annex III to the note verbale dated 7 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

SPECIAL DECLARATION

We, the Heads of State and/or Government of the Member States of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) meeting in Havana, Cuba on 4 June of 2016 for the Seventh Summit,

Reaffirming the provisions in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, approved at the Second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) held in Havana in January of 2014;

Taking note of the efforts at dialogue promoted by the government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, accompanied by UNASUR:

We support the initiatives of the former Presidents José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of Spain, Leonel Fernández of the Dominican Republic and Martín Torrijos of Panama for the reopening of an effective dialogue between the government and the opposition in order to find alternatives to promote political stability, social development and economic recovery of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

We likewise support the different initiatives of national dialogue that will lead, with adherence to the Constitution and full respect for human rights, in a timely, prompt effective manner, to the resolution of differences and the consolidation of democracy, and

We support all efforts for understanding, dialogue and constitutional procedures.